

What is advocacy?

The ISMPP Mission includes a commitment to advance the medical publication profession through education and advocacy. The organization has major, highly visible educational initiatives for members, but what would it mean to further support our profession and challenge inappropriate perceptions through advocacy? Advocacy can be defined as the active support of an idea or cause; an advocate is someone who argues in favor of, recommends, or supports this cause.

Advocacy in our setting could be defined as the active support of the role and value of the medical publication professional, and the related practices and standards that exist to ensure the integrity of medical literature. ISMPP is increasing its advocacy initiatives, and initiating a number of specific tactics for identified audiences. We also firmly believe that advocacy is more effective if activities are undertaken simultaneously at two levels: both by the organization and also by our members who play a grassroots role through their own commitment to the profession. Thus, this brochure outlines ways in which you can serve as an advocate in your professional setting.

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How can you be an advocate?

In a recent member survey, 86% of responders said they were willing to serve as an advocate for the medical publication profession. Approximately a quarter of those people said that they have participated in advocacy for the industry in the past. People are willing to be an advocate. In the response to the survey, members indicated that they were already serving as advocates in many ways ranging from engaging in discussions with colleagues, authors, and journal editors to promote best practices, the profession, ISMPP, or the CMPP program through to more formal activities like podium presentations at industry meetings. As part of the grassroots initiative, we do want members to have the tools to speak up for the cause as any appropriate professional opportunity arises. Moving forward, you will find more relevant resources on www.ismpp.org.



Putting advocacy into action

We hope this brochure stimulates your interest in serving as an advocate in your own professional setting, and gives you a framework for thinking about what you can do to be an advocate.

Here are a few more suggestions:

- Focusing on the value of medical publications provides for a proactive and constructive approach to educating on the basic need for the medical publications process—and your role and that of other publication professionals in and along that process. Think about starting any of your advocacy efforts with external audiences with this framework. Read the ISMPP Advocacy Resource on the rationale and value of medical publications and familiarize yourself with a couple of the related talking points.
- Actively embrace opportunities to speak to the role of the publication planner. Like the medical writer, the publication planner is an accomplished professional position in the medical publication process. The value that this professional function can provide in an increasingly complicated environment needs to be more clearly and frequently articulated, and there are no doubt frequent opportunities to do this in your day-to-day work setting.
- Don't hesitate in an appropriate circumstance to also point out that there is (only) one professional non-profit organization for the medical publication professional. Many people still do not know about ISMPP and educating about the existence of the organization helps to support the credibility of the profession, and also direct others with an interest in the profession to a supportive organization where they in turn can learn more. You can also remind others that ISMPP has a clear commitment to provide advocacy support for the profession.

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Thank you

We thank you for your interest and ongoing effort in being an advocate for the medical publication profession.



V1, April 20, 2010

ADVOCACY FOR THE MEDICAL PUBLICATION PROFESSION

*What does it mean?
How can you serve as an advocate?*

Directing advocacy efforts— Who to advocate to?

Your advocacy efforts are going to logically be directed at either others who are involved in the profession or groups or individuals who are external to the profession. Think about the setting or audience group you are directing your efforts towards and your objectives.

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you are directing your advocacy efforts towards and what you want the objective to be. Here are some suggested objectives for the different audience groups you may be communicating with:

Others involved in the medical publication profession or the process of medical publications

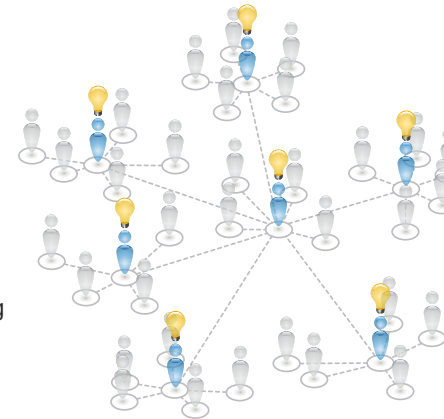
This is probably the most common setting in which you may serve as an advocate on a daily basis, in your work teams or in ad hoc interaction with others that you come in contact with. The process of creating a medical publication is extensive and, as you know, involves a wide cross-section of stakeholders, not all of whom are, or need to be, experts in the publication profession. For example, researchers, scientists, or investigators who author publications do not

necessarily understand key aspects of the process that impact them. In this setting, your objective in serving as an advocate is most likely to take every opportunity to educate others and, as a result, raise standards related to best practices. It is very likely that in the course of this action, you are also clarifying specific areas of misunderstanding.

External audiences

This is also a very diverse audience group. Think about all the possible external audiences, from your family and friends to journalists and lawyers handling litigation in the pharmaceutical or device industries. The objective is to ensure that they benefit from an improved understanding of:

- (1) the essential value of medical publications in making medical research public, and ultimately advancing healthcare
- (2) the appropriate role and underlying value of medical publication professionals in this process



External audiences that individual members can engage with in advocacy efforts would include journal editors as well as healthcare professionals

Consider that external audiences include both those that are ideally approached by the ISMPP organization on behalf of members, and those that are suitable for individual member advocacy efforts. ISMPP considers it an organizational responsibility to undertake considered advocacy efforts relative to the press, politicians, or associations, along with journal editors on a collective basis. On the other hand, external audiences that individual members can engage

with in advocacy efforts would include journal editors as well as healthcare professionals external to the publication process but perhaps, for example, in connection with medical association interaction.

What to communicate as an advocate

As you serve as an advocate, think about the key points that will meet the objectives discussed in the previous section. Advocacy, like many other communication disciplines, will be most effective if the communication points are clear and are made consistently. Here are some topics and key communication points that ISMPP considers important to the organization's advocacy platform.

a. The rationale and value of medical publications:

- To educate and inform a wide variety of healthcare professionals concerning diseases and their treatment
- Help to translate, analyze and provide context to scientific and clinical data in a meaningful way

b. Publication planning

- To help ensure that clinical data are published by the appropriate regulatory deadlines, that appropriate acknowledgements are made in publications, conflicts of interest are declared, and that authorship criteria are satisfied

- To help determine where evidence is lacking and to provide the missing information or overview

c. Professional medical writers

- The disclosed contribution of a professional medical writer is a best practice in the publication process
- Combine their knowledge of science with an ability to effectively communicate through writing
- Usually have advanced degrees in life sciences, including physicians, pharmacists, nurses and PhDs and may be affiliated with academic institutions or the pharmaceutical industry

ISMPP Advocacy Resource sheets on the above 3 topics are provided as a handout or can be found on the ISMPP web site.

d. Best practices

Best practices could cover dozens of subpoints, any one of which could be important depending on the circumstances in which you are acting as an

advocate. Refer in the first instance to GPP2 for a recommendation that aligns with ISMPP's position on elements of best practices—and don't hesitate to refer your audience directly to this or other documentation relating to best practices.

e. Ethics and professional responsibilities

- Are defined for the medical publication profession in an established code of ethics

